

# **SPECULATIVE FICTION IN TRANSLATION**

**2020**

[sfintranslation.com](http://sfintranslation.com)

## **Introduction**

Despite the apocalyptic turn that 2020 has taken, we still have a lot of great SFT to read and even more coming up. With anthologies of stories translated from the Romanian and Chinese; science fiction and fantasy collections from the French, Bengali, and Italian; and speculative novels from many languages including Sierra Zapotec, Hebrew, and Czech, there's something for everyone. Of course, we wouldn't have any of these wonderful stories to read in English if it weren't for the talented and hard-working translators, as well as the publishers who give these books a chance. It's also because of you, the readers, that we are getting more SFT with each passing year. So sit back, buckle your seatbelts, and prepare to blast off to some fantastic adventures of the mind and the universe.

Rachel Cordasco

May 2020

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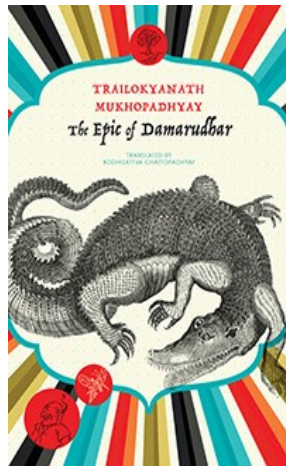
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## BENGALI



### *The Epic of Damarudhar*

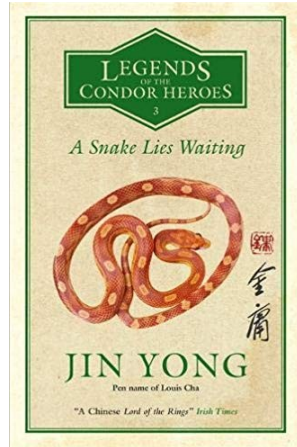
by Trailokyanath Mukhopadhyay

translated by Bodhisattva Chattopadhyay

Seagull Books

“Originally published between 1910 and 1917, and collected in book form in 1923, *The Epic of Damarudhar* story cycle occupies an important and unique position in the history of Bengali literature. Tackling cosmology and mythology, class and caste abuse, nativist demagoguery and the harsh reality of rural poverty, all by means of unrelentingly fierce black comedy, Trailokyanath Mukhopadhyay’s cycle of seven stories featuring the raconteur Damarudhar remains prescient social commentary to this day.”

## CHINESE



### ***A Snake Lies Waiting (Legends of the Condor Heroes 3)***

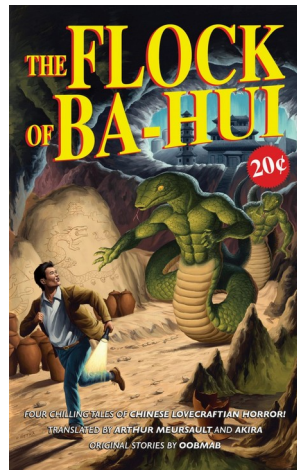
by Jin Yong

translated by Anna Holmwood and Gigi Chang

MacLehose Press

“China: 1200 A.D. Guo Jing has confronted Apothecary Huang, his sweetheart Lotus’ father, on Peach Blossom Island, and bested the villainous Gallant Ouyang in three trials to win her hand in marriage. But now, along with his sworn brother, Zhou Botong of the Quanzhen Sect, and his *shifu*, Count Seven Hong, Chief of the Beggar Clan, he has walked into a trap. Tricked by Huang into boarding a unseaworthy barge, they will surely drown unless Lotus – who has overheard her father’s plans – can find a way to save them.

Yet even if they are to survive the voyage, great dangers lie in wait on the mainland. The Jin Prince Wanyan Honglie has gathered a band of unscrupulous warriors to aid him in his search for the lost writings of the Great Song patriot General Yue Fei. If he is successful, the Jin armies will gain the key to total victory over the Song Empire, condemning Guo Jing’s countrymen to centuries of servitude.”



### ***The Flock of Ba-Hui***

by Oobmab

translated by Arthur Meursault and Akira

Camphor Press

“A researcher disappears while exploring the deep caverns of mountainous Sichuan, where folklore speaks of primeval reptilian gods sleeping beneath the earth. An artist dreams of a mysterious black tower stretching skyward for infinity, and glimpses the cold truth of the universe when he decides to climb it. Strange bubbling and decomposed corpses are discovered in the tunnels beneath an old house in the city of Qingdao, and an ancient temple in Tibet terrifies all who dare approach. Meanwhile, in an abandoned house, a stranger gathers together a group of bewildered scholars to whisper in the darkness of eldritch abominations and even weirder phantasms. From the stygian depths of the Chinese internet,...four wholly original tales of cosmic horror based on the works of H. P. Lovecraft and translated into English for the very first time.”

## CHINESE, cont'd



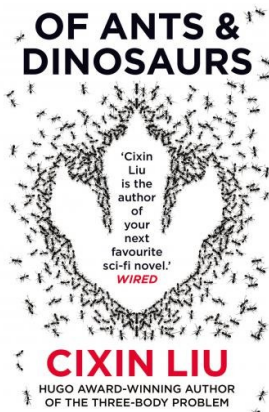
### ***That We May Live: Speculative Chinese Fiction***

by Dorothy Tse, Enoch Tam, Zhu Hui, Chan Chi Wa, Chen Si'an, and Yan Ge

translated by Natascha Bruce, Jeremy Tiang, Michael Day, Audrey Heijns, and Canaan Morse

Two Lines Press

“In this first book in the brand-new Calico Series, we bring you work by some of today’s most exciting writers from China and Hong Kong, including Dorothy Tse (tr. Natascha Bruce), Zhu Hui (tr. Michael Day), and Enoch Tam (tr. Jeremy Tiang). Lightly touching on issues of urbanization, sexuality, and propaganda, the collection builds a world both utterly disorienting and disturbingly familiar, prompting the question: Where does reality end and absurdity begin in a world pushed to its very limits?”



### ***Of Ants and Dinosaurs***

by Cixin Liu

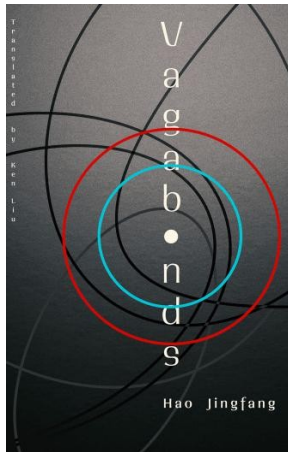
translated by Holger Nahm

Head of Zeus

“In a sunlit clearing in central Gondwana, on an otherwise ordinary day in the late Cretaceous, the seeds of Earth's first and greatest civilization were sown in the grisly aftermath of a Tyrannosaurus' lunch.

Throughout the universe, intelligence is a rare and fragile commodity – a fleeting glimmer in the long night of cosmic history. That Earth should harbour not just one but two intelligent species at the same time, defies the odds. That these species, so unlike – and yet so complementary – should forge an alliance that kindled a civilization defies logic. But time is endless and everything comes to pass eventually....”

## CHINESE, cont'd



### ***Vagabonds***

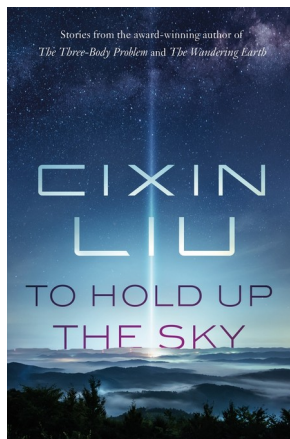
by Hao Jingfang

translated by Ken Liu

Gallery/Saga Press

“AD 2201. Just over a century ago, the Martian colonies declared their independence. After a brief conflict, Earth and Mars cut ties, carving separate trajectories into the future, viewing each other with suspicion and even hatred. Five years ago, a group of Martian students were sent to Earth as goodwill ambassadors from the Red Planet. Now the young men and women are coming home, escorting a delegation of prominent Terrans to see if the two worlds can bridge the void that has opened up between them.

Luoying, one of the returning Martians, is caught amidst the political intrigue and philosophical warfare. Martians and Terrans, old friends and new mentors, statesmen and revolutionaries – everything and everyone challenges her, pushing her to declare her allegiance.”



### ***To Hold Up the Sky***

by Cixin Liu

translated by Joel Martinsen

Tor Books

“*To Hold Up the Sky* is a breathtaking collection of imaginative science fiction. Stories included are”:

Contraction

Full Spectrum Barrage Jamming

The Village Teacher

Fire in the Earth

Time Migration

Ode to joy

Cloud of Poems

Mirror

Sea of Dreams

Cloud of Poems

The Thinker

## CHINESE, cont'd



### ***A Summer Beyond Your Reach***

by Xia Jia

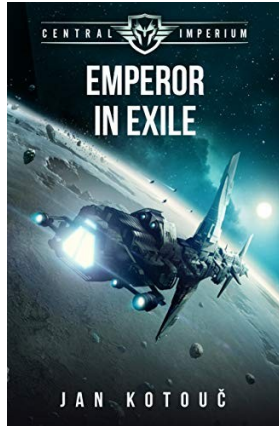
various translators

Clarkesworld Books

“Xia Jia's first English language short story collection and the debut book from Clarkesworld Books, a new SF translation imprint. Stories include”:

Six Views of a Spring Festival / The Psychology Game /  
Up in The Air / Meeting Anna / On Miluo River /  
A Time Beyond Your Reach / Tick-Tock / Eternal Summer Dream  
Heat Island /Duet of Love /Light of Their Days /All You Need Is Love  
Night Journey of the Dragon-Horse / Tongtong’s Summer

## CZECH



### *Emperor in Exile*

by Jan Kotouč

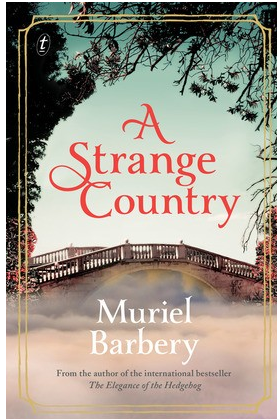
translated by Isabel Stainsby

Arbiter Press

“Daniel Hankerson never wanted to be the Emperor. He was perfectly happy as a normal intelligence officer, analyst and a poker player. But fate never asks what you want. Now, after the biggest defeat in the history of the Central Imperium, Daniel is isolated aboard the communications ship, and for months he can only speak to his Imperium and listen to the news of mounting losses. His enemies continue to chase him and they have their own plans for controlling the Imperium. And for them to do that, Daniel Hankerson must die.”



## FRENCH



### *A Strange Country*

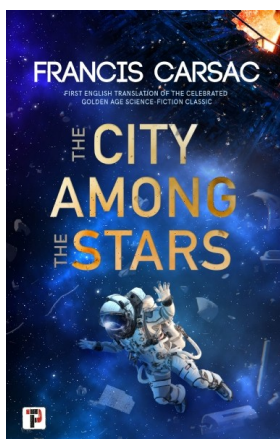
by Muriel Barbery

translated by Alison Anderson

Europa Editions

“Who is Petrus, this amiable redhead who appears out of nowhere in the cellar of the Castillo where Alejandro de Yepes and Jesús Rocamora, young officers in the Spanish regular army, are stationed? Petrus exudes magnetism and a mysterious aura. Alejandro and Jesús are bewitched, and, in the middle of the sixth year of the longest war humankind has ever endured, they abandon their post to follow him across a bridge they cannot see.

Petrus’s world is one of lingering fog, strange beings, poetry, music, natural wonders, harmony and extraordinary beauty. It is also where the fate of the world we recognize as our own, and all its living creatures, is decided. Yet it is under threat. A long conflict with the forces of disenchantment is drawing to a climactic close. Whether poetry and beauty will prevail over darkness and death, and what role Alejandro and Jesús will play in all of this, lends suspense to Muriel Barbery’s new richly imagined novel about a world facing annihilation.”



### *The City Among the Stars*

by Francis Carsac

translated by Judith Sullivan and Margaret Schiff

Flame Tree Press

“Tankar Holroy, Lieutenant in the Stellar Guard of earth’s Empire, floats in space after his spaceship is sabotaged. Rescued by an enormous, unknown ship, he awakes to discover himself saved by the People of the Stars who are born and live in space with minimal contact with planets and their occupants whom they call, with contempt, planetaries. The chilly welcome he receives from the ship’s leader, the Teknor, is followed by overt hostility from the other inhabitants of the Tilsin. Only a woman named Orena reaches out to him. Tankar soon realizes that he was rescued for his knowledge of tracers, the technology that allows Empire ships to track others through hyperspace, a technology the People of the Stars lack. Out of spite, he refuses to deliver the one piece of knowledge that can protect the people who saved but now spurn him - and the consequences will be catastrophic.”

## GERMAN



### ***Qualityland***

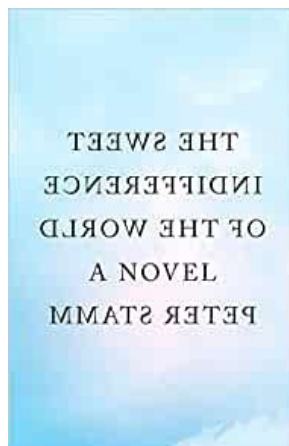
by Marc-Uwe Kling

translated by Jamie Searle Romanelli

Grand Central Publishing

"Eerily prescient and peppered with near-future projections (including the cryogenic resurrection of Jennifer Aniston), *Qualityland* reads like the best *Black Mirror* episode as written by Kurt Vonnegut. Kling delivers scythe-sharp satire, steering us through a hysterical dystopian adventure of technological determinism, all while skewering consumer culture, politics, free will, and making me rethink my relationship with my Roomba. Witty, wise, and terrifyingly funny, *Qualityland* is a genius gem and an absolute must read. I laughed my phone off."

— Kira Jane Buxton, author of *Hollow Kingdom*



### ***The Sweet Indifference of the World***

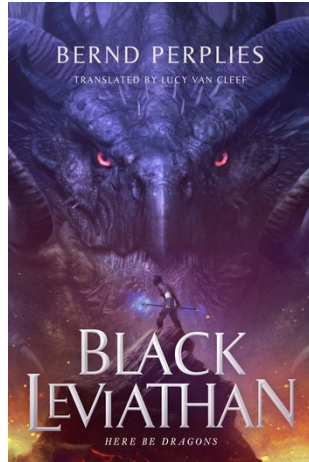
by Peter Stamm

translated by Michael Hofmann

Other Press

"In this alluring, melancholic novel—Peter Stamm at his best—a writer haunted by his double blurs the line between past and present, fiction and reality, in his attempt to outrun the unknown."

## GERMAN, cont'd



### ***Black Leviathan***

by Bernd Perplies

translated by Lucy Van Cleef

Tor Books

“In the coastal city Skargakar, residents make a living from hunting dragons and use them for everything from clothing to food, while airborne ships hunt them in the white expanse of a cloud sea, the Cloudmere.

Lian does his part carving the kyrillian crystals that power the ships through the Cloudmere, but when he makes an enemy of a dangerous man, Lian ships out on the next vessel available as a drachenjager, or dragon hunter. He chooses the wrong ship. A fanatic captain, hunts more than just any dragon. His goal is the Firstborn Gargantuan—and Adaron is prepared to sacrifice everything for revenge.”

## HEBREW



### *Simantov*

by Asaf Ashery

translated by Marganit Weinberger-Rotman

Angry Robot

Women disappear from streets, clubs, and rooftops leaving the police dazed and confused. The mystical Soothsayer Task Force must use their special skills to divine the truth and solve the mystery.

## INDONESIAN



### *The Wandering*

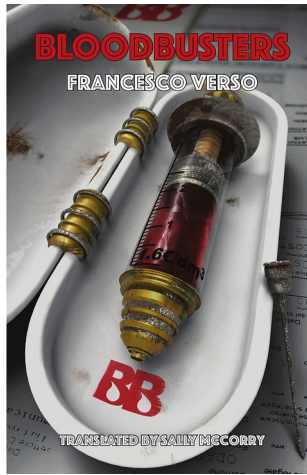
by Intan Paramaditha

translated by Stephen J. Epstein

Harvill Secker

“*The Wandering* is a novel about the highs and lows of global nomadism, the politics and privileges of travel and desire, and the freedoms and limitations of the choices we make, by one of Asia’s most exciting writers. It’s a reminder that borders are real, and a playful experiment that turns the traditional adventure story on its head.

## ITALIAN



### ***BloodBusters***

by Francesco Verso

translated by Sally McCorry

Luna Press Publishing

Verso's *BloodBusters* is a heady mix of economic and political intrigue and fast-paced adventure, all circulating (*pun intended!*) around the unique premise that people pay their taxes in blood instead of money. As with his previous novel in translation, *Nexhuman*, Verso plunges his readers into a dystopian world that is disturbing precisely because it is so close to our own, but with a dark twist.



### ***Creative Surgery***

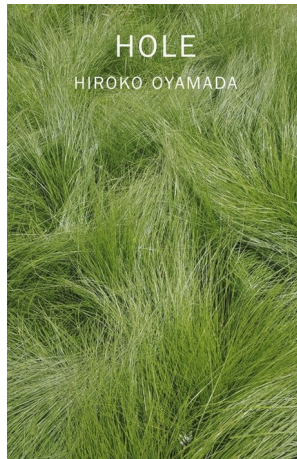
by Clelia Farris

translated by Rachel Cordasco and Jennifer Delare

Rosarium Publishing

“In Farris' mind-bending tales, you'll find captivating characters with elusive identities like Kieser, who longs to transform himself through horrific procedures in "Creative Surgery," or Yuliano (“Secret Enemy”), a man with no aesthetic taste, or Gabola, engaged in the battle of a lifetime against the expropriation of the Little Tuvu Hill. With dry and polished prose, like the stones of her native Sardinia, Farris takes us on adventures among the ruins of a future marred by climate change ("A Day to Remember") and in a haunting prison inhabited by the enigmatic figure of "Rebecca." Collected and translated into English for the first time, these seven stories represent some of the greatest works from one of Italy's best science fiction authors.

## JAPANESE



### ***The Hole***

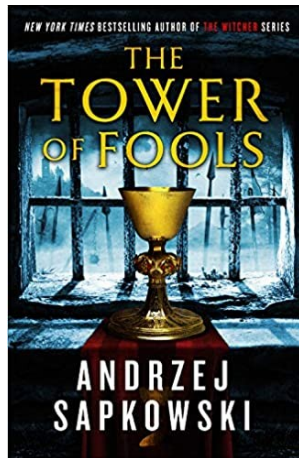
by Hiroko Oyamada

translated by David Boyd

New Directions

Winner of the Akutagawa Prize, *The Hole* is by turns reminiscent of Lewis Carroll, David Lynch, and *My Neighbor Totoro*, but is singularly unsettling.

## POLISH



### ***The Tower of Fools***

by Andrzej Sapkowski

translated by David French

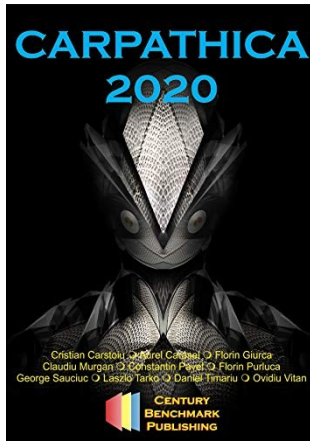
Orbit Books

“Reinmar of Bielau, sometimes known as Reynevan, is a doctor, a magician and, according to some, a charlatan. And when a thoughtless indiscretion finds him caught in the crosshairs of powerful noble family, he is forced to flee his home. But once he passes beyond the city borders, he finds that there are dangers ahead as well as behind. Strange mystical forces are gathering in the shadows. And pursued not only by the affronted Stercza brothers, bent on vengeance, but also by the Holy Inquisition, Reynevan finds himself in the Narrenturm, the Tower of Fools.

The Tower is an asylum for the mad, or for those who dare to think differently and challenge the prevailing order. And escaping the Tower, avoiding the conflict around him, and keeping his own sanity might prove a greater challenge than Reynevan ever imagined.”



## ROMANIAN



### *Carpathica 2020*

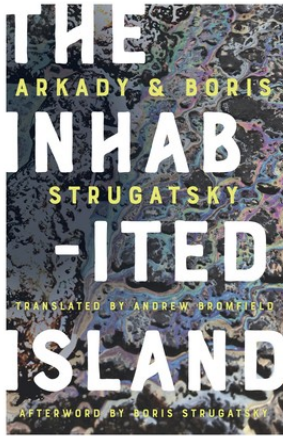
by Cristian Carstoiu, Aurel Carasel, Florin Giurca, Florin Purluca,  
Ovidiu Vitan, Laszlo Tarko, Daniel Timariu, Catalin Pavel,  
Claudiu Murgan, George Sauciuc

various translators

Century Benchmark Publishing

“A carefully chosen anthology of Romanian short science-fiction stories, featuring "Stellavirus" with an intriguing theory about the Coronavirus pandemic. You'll also find out the relationship between the dinosaurs and the Neanderthal Man, how mathematics and the Stonehenge monument help space-time travel, the future of mankind as wandering crystals or how the end of the world will look like. If you like the genre, this anthology is a feast of well-written literature.”

## RUSSIAN



### ***The Inhabited Island***

by Arkady and Boris Strugatsky

translated by Andrew Bromfield

Chicago Review Press

“When Maxim Kammerer, a young space explorer from twenty-second-century Earth, crash-lands on an uncharted world, he thinks of himself as a latter-day Robinson Crusoe. Eager to establish first contact with the planet's humanlike inhabitants, he finds himself increasingly entangled in their primitive way of life. After his experiences in their nightmarish military, criminal justice, and mental health systems, Maxim begins to realize that his sojourn on this radioactive and war-scarred world will not be a walk in the park. *The Inhabited Island* is one of the Strugatsky brothers' most popular and acclaimed novels, yet the only previous English-language edition (*Prisoners of Power*) was based on a version heavily censored by Soviet authorities. Now, in a new edition by translator Andrew Bromfield, this landmark novel can be newly appreciated by both longtime Strugatsky fans and new explorers of the Russian science fiction masters' rich body of work.”



### ***Daughter From the Dark***

by Marina and Sergey Dyachenko

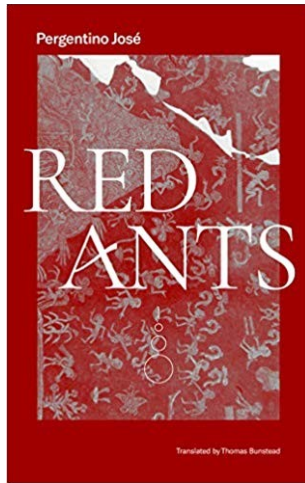
translated by Julia Meitov Hersey

Harper Voyager

“In this extraordinary stand-alone novel, the authors and translator of *Vita Nostra*—a “dark Harry Potter on steroids with a hefty dose of metaphysics” (award-winning author Aliette de Bodard)—return with a story about creation, music, and companionship filled with their hallmark elements of subtle magic and fantasy.”



## SIERRA ZAPOTEC



### ***Red Ants***

by Pergentino José

translated by Thomas Bunstead

Deep Vellum

“A literary triumph by a member of the Mexico20 (the list that boasts Valeria Luiselli and Carlos Velasquez, among others), *Red Ants* is the first-ever literary translation from the Sierra Zapotec. This vibrant collection of short stories by one of Mexico’s most promising young authors updates magical realism for the 21st century. *Red Ants* paints a candid picture of indigenous Mexican life—an essential counterpoint to cultural products of the colonial gaze. José’s fantastical stories tackle themes of family, love, and independence in his signature style: unapologetically personal, coolly emotional, and always surprising.”

## SPANISH



### ***Surrender***

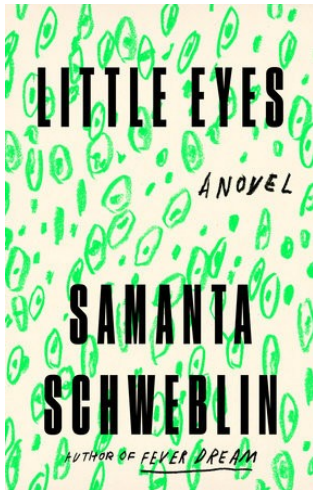
by Ray Loriga

translated by Carolina de Robertis

Mariner Books

“Ten long years have passed since war first broke out, and one couple still does not know the whereabouts of their children, or what their country is even fighting for. They follow orders and their lives go by simply, routinely, until—one day—a mute boy walks onto their property. When the authorities announce that the area needs to be evacuated and that everyone must relocate to “the transparent city,” the three leave together.

At first, the city proves to be a paradise: ...but a sinister underlay begins to emerge. Neither secrets nor walls are permitted here, and strict order, authoritarian calm, and transparency must always reign supreme. In a society in which everything private is public, the most chilling portent of our future emerges. *Surrender* is an urgent novel about dignity and rebellion and the lengths we go to preserve love, hope, and humanity.



### ***Little Eyes***

by Samanta Schweblin

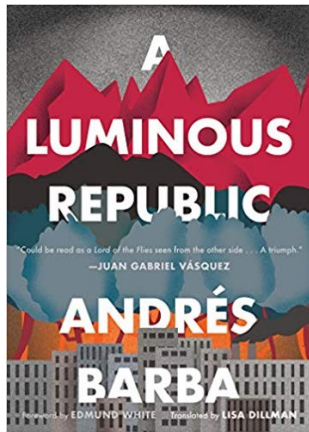
translated by Megan McDowell

Riverhead Books

“They’ve infiltrated homes in Hong Kong, shops in Vancouver, the streets of in Sierra Leone, town squares in Oaxaca, schools in Tel Aviv, bedrooms in Indiana. They’re everywhere. They’re here. They’re us. They’re not pets, or ghosts, or robots. They’re real people, but how can a person living in Berlin walk freely through the living room of someone in Sydney? How can someone in Bangkok have breakfast with your children in Buenos Aires, without your knowing? Especially when these people are completely anonymous, unknown, unfindable.

The characters in *Little Eyes*, reveal the beauty of connection between far-flung souls—but yet they also expose the ugly side of our increasingly linked world. In this prophecy of a story, Schweblin creates a dark and complex world that’s somehow so sensible, so recognizable, that once it’s entered, no one can ever leave.”

## SPANISH, cont'd



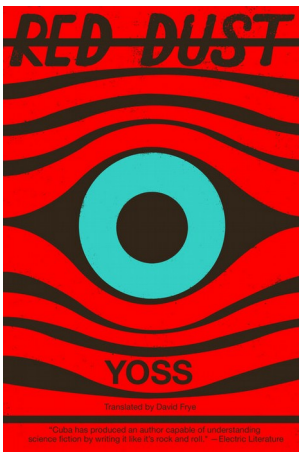
### *A Luminous Republic*

by Andrés Barba

translated by Lisa Dillman

HMH

“A new novel from a Spanish literary star about the arrival of feral children to a tropical city in Argentina, and the quest to stop them from pulling the place into chaos.”



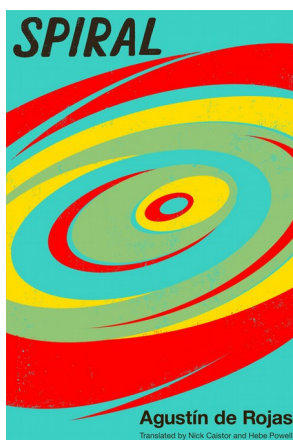
### *Red Dust*

by Yoss

translated by David Frye

Restless Books

“From beloved Cuban science fiction author Yoss comes a bitingly funny space-opera homage to Raymond Chandler, about a positronic robot detective on the hunt for some extra-dangerous extraterrestrial criminals.”



### *Spiral (#3)*

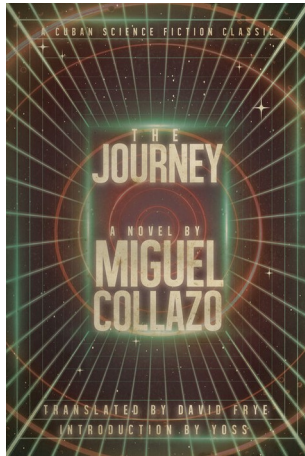
by Agustín de Rojas

translated by Nick Caistor and Hebe Powell

Restless Books

“The winner of Cuba’s prestigious Premio David in 1980, *Spiral* is another magisterial space opera from the late great science fiction author Agustín de Rojas. Deeply committed to the Revolution, Rojas presents a stunning critique of the Cuban regime under Fidel Castro by inviting the comparison of *Spiral*’s fictional moral universe, one in which Che Guevara’s principles of socialism are followed to the letter, with the brutal realities of everyday Cuba.”

## SPANISH, cont'd



### ***The Journey***

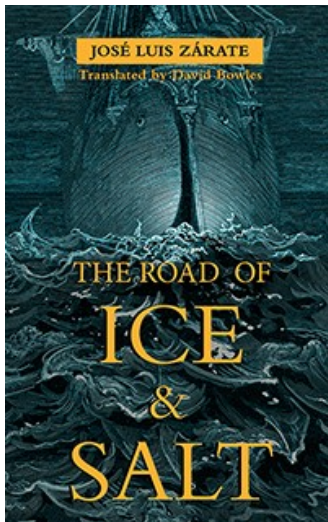
by Miguel Collazo

translated by David Frye

Restless Books

“On planet Ambar, long ago colonized by scientists who arrived by spaceship, inhabitants no longer live in cities. Generation after generation, Ambarians wander through the desert, the valley, and the ruins as the mysterious “symbols” loom in the sky. Once a new generation develops the ability to broadcast images, feelings and memories to others, they start to hope and wait for a life-changing transformation: *The Journey*.”

Filled with intricate family trees, huge desert flowers, and intelligent automatons, Miguel Collazo’s evocative world traces the makings of a civilization that has lost its way and gradually rebuilds itself in a desolate landscape. This multi-generational saga highlights what binds us together as a community and the roles that memory, affection, and hope play in our history.”



### ***The Road of Ice and Salt***

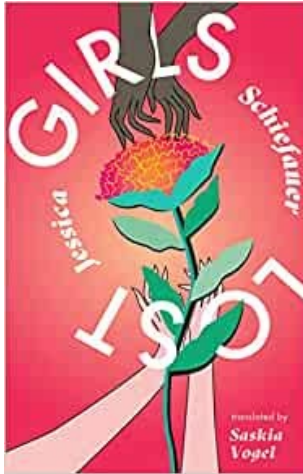
by José Luis Zárate

translated by David Bowles

Innsmouth Free Press

“Originally published in 1998, *The Road of Ice and Salt* is an award-winning, cult horror novella by Mexican author José Luis Zárate. Although Zárate is one of the most important speculative fiction writers of his generation, his work has not been translated into English. Innsmouth Free Press will produce an English-language, print and digital edition (translated by David Bowles) of *The Road of Ice and Salt*, with an accompanying essay and afterword.”

## SWEDISH

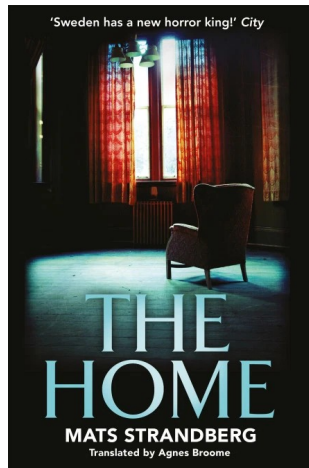


### ***Girls Lost***

by Jessica Schiefauer

translated by Saskia Vogel

“An award-winning, magical contemporary novel about three teenage girls whose exploration of fantasy threatens everything they know of reality.”



### ***The Home***

by Mats Strandberg

translated by Agnes Broome

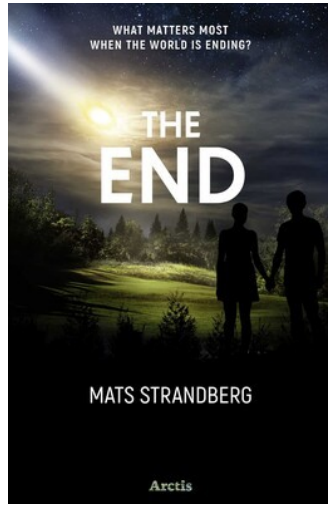
Jo Fletcher Books

“Once inseparable, Joel and Nina haven’t spoken in twenty years. When Joel’s mother Monika develops dementia, he has no choice but to return to his home town. Monika needs specialist care, and that means Pineshade – which also means Joel is going to have to deal with his one-time best friend, for Nina works there.

It’s not long before Monika’s health deteriorates – she starts having violent, terrifying outbursts, and worse, she appears to know things she couldn’t possibly know. It’s almost as if she isn’t herself any more...but of course, that’s true of most of the residents at Pineshade.

Only Nina and Joel know Monika well enough to see the signs; only by working together can they try to find answers to the inexplicable...”

## SWEDISH, cont'd



### *The End*

by Mats Strandberg

translated by ?

Arctis

“When will the world end? With Foxworth, a massive meteor, hurtling toward Earth, humanity now knows the exact date.

Seventeen-year-old Simon wants to spend his last weeks with the people he cares about most, especially his goal-oriented swimmer ex-girlfriend, Tilda, who dumped him shortly after the news broke. Since Lucinda was diagnosed with cancer she’s, retreated into herself preparing for the inevitable. Suddenly facing down a death that makes her the same as everyone else, she longs to connect again but doesn’t quite know where to start. Reaching out to her former best friend Tilda seems like a good first step. Then Tilda is found dead and accusations start circling that Simon is the killer. As the days tick down, Simon and Lucinda only want to know the truth, but the more they uncover about the final days of the girl they both cared for deeply, the clearer the things that really matter become.”



## TURKISH



### *Wûf*

by Kemal Varol

translated by Dayla Rogers

University of Texas Press

“Told through the voice of a canine narrator, *Wûf* is a surrealist wartime love story set in Turkey in the 1990s. The novel follows Mikasa, a street dog who recounts a tale of tragic wartime love at a kennel where he finds solace in storytelling and cigarettes. A book that took the Turkish literary world by storm, Kemal Varol’s *Wûf* tackles universal themes of love and loss with both humor and pathos. Translated by PEN/Heim Award winner Dayla Rogers, the novel renders in English a one-of-a-kind love story with a narrator its readers won’t soon forget.”